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Date: 9/12/79 By [redacted]

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: JOT [redacted]

SUBJECT: Comments on the Junior Officer Training Program

As a Junior Officer Trainee with CIA for a year and a half, I have become familiar with the JOT Program from the point of view of a participant. I have taken considerable interest in the program and I feel that, because of what it offers the potential recruit, it is an excellent way of attracting to this vital work good people who might otherwise never hear of the organization. I have been concerned, therefore, when, from my own experience and from discussions with other trainees, I have become aware of certain shortcomings of the program which decrease its effectiveness. I would like to make my comments on the program a matter and bring them to the attention of those who could do something about them, because I feel they are valid criticisms of a situation which could be corrected. I believe that certain changes based on these comments could save the Agency considerable amounts of money and lead to creating a more capable and satisfied group of Junior Officer Trainees and ultimately of trained intelligence officers.

The situation which has aroused my concern is the lack of a clear definition of the purpose of the JOT Program, at least in the eyes of the trainees themselves, and confusion as to how the purpose is to be carried out. This situation leads to a number of specific problems which have caused dissatisfaction and disillusionment among Junior Officer Trainees, whether or not they have actually left the Agency.

The most serious problem is that in spite of the extensive promises made to the JOT when he is recruited and the great amount of testing and training to which he is subjected when he enters on duty, the program fails to follow through with any sort of personal guidance or career planning once the JOT is placed on a desk. The incoming JOT is made to feel that he is a specially selected individual who is to become part of a long range program aimed at familiarizing him with all the various components of the Agency and guiding him through different jobs to a position where, because of the talents and abilities for which he was selected and the training he has received, he can be of particular value to the Agency.

Yet the JOT finds that after the initial training period he is placed on a desk and is pretty much on his own. He finds that from then on he has little or no contact with the JOT office unless he takes the initiative. The bi- or tri-monthly reports which the JOT is supposed to submit - but which are frequently forgotten - tend to become formal statements enumerating duties performed but ignoring the personal aspects of the job. The trainee can, of course, go to the JOT offices to discuss a specific problem. But there he finds, as I and other with whom I have talked have found, that the emphasis is so much on the new incoming trainees that there is little time left for those who are already placed. He finds that there is no-one who is personally familiar with his particular interests and abilities and with his performance in courses or on the

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job, with whom he can discuss his career. At this point the JOT is apt to decide that the program has done all it intends to do for him and he might as well transfer to the desk TO where he is more in touch with his superior and can handle his own career planning. This solution certainly has the merits of putting the trainee on his own and having him fend for himself, as any other employee of the Agency must do. But the JOT cannot help feeling that he has been misled as to the purpose of the program if, contrary to his impression, it deals mainly with the procurement of trainees, not with their development into long range assets. The solution to this problem, I believe, is a counseling system such as I describe later in this paper.

5 A second problem connected with the confusion as to the purpose of the JOT Program is the doubt about exactly what sort of people are being or should be selected for the program. The current emphasis seems to be on placing JOTs in the DD/P. It is not clear whether this is because it is felt that anyone in intelligence should have experience as a case officer, or because the program is aimed primarily at recruiting future case officers.

6 If the latter is true, i.e., that the program aims at recruiting for the DD/P, I feel that the criteria apparently being used in the selection of candidates should be re-examined. Is it necessarily the serious student who received the best grades who will make the best case officer? or is not the student who was less concerned with the academic side of college frequently more original, ingenious, and adept at handling actual situations? And is not the class officer and college leader frequently the type who likes to be in the public eye and enjoys having people know just what he is doing and how important his job is? I realize that the whole problem of what makes a good case officer is extremely complicated. And I, with my limited experience, do not pretend to try to answer it. But this brings me to the question of exactly who is to say what sort of person makes the best case officer. It seemed pointless to me when a group of Junior Officer Trainees met last year with a group of college deans and placement officials acting as spotters for potential JOTs, supposedly to discuss with them what qualities to look for in recruits for the program. A number of trainees, including myself, felt that the recruiters should talk, not to new employees who have had little or no experience, but to branch chiefs and senior case officers with experience in field intelligence work who can give at least some idea of the qualities they believe make good case officers. The JOT cannot help feeling that the selection of potential case officers is somewhat arbitrary when there is such a gap, perhaps merely a lack of communication, between those who have actual DD/P experience and those who do the selecting of recruits for jobs in the DD/P.

7 The other point, namely, that most trainees are placed in the DD/P because anyone in the intelligence business should have case officer experience, is certainly valid to a degree, but it too bears some examination. In the first place, there are many jobs outside the DD/P for which case officer experience is not necessary. The program would have little value for a language or area specialist who can come into the Agency and go at once to a specific job for which he is qualified with little or no additional training. Other specialized fields such as communications, TSS, and the like also have no place in a broad training program. The main area which could fit into the program, in addition to the training of case officers, is the training of administrators. It hardly

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needs pointing out that the respective functions of a case officer and of an administrator require quite different types of people. If some JOI's are to be administrators, they should be selected on the basis of administrative ability as tested, for example, by the JMA, and should then become part of something like the Internship Program as used by other government agencies. They must naturally have some case officer experience in order to understand the problems of the field, but it should be made clear that a tour in the DD/P is only a step leading to a job more suited to their particular interests. Among trainees who are not "DD/P types", this could avoid much of the frustration caused by the emphasis on case officer work as the ultimate in the intelligence business.

Once the purpose of the program has been clearly defined and the criteria for selection brought closer to the actual needs for personnel, the problem of handling the JOI after his initial training remains to be solved. I believe that there is one effective way to follow up the extensive work done in selecting and training the JOI and to make the most of the talents for which he was hired. This can only be done by keeping in close personal touch with the trainee throughout his testing and training period and in his job assignments by means of a personal counseling system.

Such a system would require a group of trained advisors not hampered by administrative details or kept occupied with liaison with higher officials, who could devote themselves individually to the trainees. Each JOI on entering should be assigned to a personal advisor with a thorough understanding of the various components of CIA and the different types of work done, and some knowledge of the requirements of various division and branch chiefs for personnel. This advisor would be familiar with the JOI's particular interests and aptitudes, know his desires for the future, and follow his reactions to the different courses and jobs to which he is exposed. Through this advisor the assessment made by A & E could be actively applied to the trainee's career. The evaluations from the training courses the JOI takes could be studied by the advisor in the light of the trainee's interests. A poor score in a course could be analysed to see if perhaps the particular area of that course was not of interest to the JOI and hence should be avoided in his job assignments. In my own case, such an analysis a year ago when I received a poor evaluation on the Operations Familiarization Course might have brought about much sooner the realization that I was not best suited for work as a case officer. I might then have found a more satisfactory job in reports work or in the DD/I instead of leaving the Agency altogether. In summary, I question the value of continually bringing new trainees into the Agency if there is not sufficient personnel to handle and keep in close personal touch with those already hired and placed. Without one person to follow the progress of the JOI personally, to discuss career planning on the basis of performance in tests, courses, and on the job, and to see that he is used to the best advantage for the Agency, the JOI is just like any other person who comes on board with the Agency in a professional capacity.

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I believe that the JOT Program has brought many good people into the Agency, has trained them and placed many of them in positions where they are doing an excellent job. But the fact remains that many Junior Officer Trainees, whether they leave the Agency or not, are dissatisfied because of the lack of clear definition of the purpose of the program and failure to follow through on the promises made when they were recruited. I think the program has a very important function to fulfill; it could carry out this function much better if a precise definition were made of what the program is trying to do and then specific steps were taken to see that this purpose was followed through to its conclusion. This could be accomplished, at least in part, by:

1. Basing the selection and recruiting of JOTs on a more specific knowledge of the type of person best suited for the work, and
2. Setting up a counseling system to follow up the recruiting and training of the JOT with personal guidance to help him find the place where he would be best suited for the work and could do the most good for the Agency.

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